

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13
OMB-01 SAJ-01 SSM-03 MCT-01 TRSE-00 /075 W
----- 064051 /17

R 171425Z DEC 76
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8556
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 1746

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS, JO
SUBJECT: ATTEMPT TO CHANGE EDITORIAL POLICY OF AL FEJR

REF: JERUSALEM 1609

1. THE EAST JERUSALEM ARABIC DAILY AL FEJR, WHICH
FOLLOWS A STRONG PRO-PLO AND LEFTIST, ANTI-AMERICAN EDITORIAL
POLICY, HAS NOT PUBLISHED FOR THE LAST TWO WEEKS. IN ITS
LAST ISSUE, THE PAPER ANNOUNCED PUBLICATION WOULD BE
INTERRUPTED WHILE NEW EQUIPMENT WAS BEING INSTALLED. HOWEVER,
CONGEN OFFICER HAS NOW BEEN TOLD BY WELL-INFORMED WB SOURCE
CLOSE TO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, THAT DELAY IN
RESUMING PUBLICATION REFLECTS DEADLOCK OVER FUTURE EDITORIAL
POLICY.

2. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, PAUL AJLOUNI, AN AMCIT AND PART
OWNER, WHO HAS RECENTLY BEEN ACTIVE IN AN ATTEMPT TO SECURE
GOI APPROVAL FOR WB PARTICIPATION IN THE UPCOMING
PALESTINIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL (REFTEL), HAS URGED
EDITORIAL STAFF TO ABANDON CRITICISM OF EGYPTIAN PRESI-
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DENT SADAT'S INTERNAL POLICIES. (CRITICISM OF FOREIGN
POLICY, E.G. SINAI II, COULD CONTINUE.) FURTHERMORE,
THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF HANNA SIGNORA TOLD CONGEN OFFICER
PREVIOUSLY THAT HE WAS CONSIDERING MODERATING THE PAPER'S
ANTI-AMERICAN BIAS.

3. ACCORDING TO NEWSWEEK'S MIKE KUBIC, SIGNORA AND AJLOUNI HAVE GOTTEN SUPPORT FROM SEVEN OF NINE WEST BANK MAYORS WHO RECENTLY MET TO DISCUSS THE MATTER. THE TWO MAYORS, WHO ARE RESISTING THE CHANGE ARE, ACCORDING TO OUR WB SOURCE, RAMALLAH'S KARIM KHALAF AND TULKARM'S HILMI HANNUN, WHO ARE ALSO THE ONLY MAYORS PUBLICALLY IDENTIFIED AS MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND REPORTEDLY MAJOR STOCKHOLDERS. KHALAF AND HANNUN DO NOT WANT TO SEE THE CURRENT EDITOR, WELL-KNOWN COMMUNIST BASHIR BARGHUTI, SACKED A MOVE WHICH PRESUMABLY WOULD BE ENTAILED IN A POLICY SWITCH. BARGHUTI'S REPLACEMENT WOULD PROBABLY BE GHASAN TAHBUB, UNTIL RECENTLY THE TOP REPORTER OF AL QUDS, OR POSSIBLY ZUHIR RAIS, THE THIRD MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, WHO IS CONSIDERED VERY PRO-EGYPTIAN.

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Message Attributes

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